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ABSTRACT

In this study an attempt was made to determine values of young children by showing them pictures and asking predetermined questions. The object was to assess the commonality or diversity of the children's assumptions with respect to physical contact as revealed by their responses. Eighteen 5-year-old children were selected to react to three pictures expressing helping, playing, and hugging physical contact; five of the children were also observed for three 5-minute sessions each. The responses to each picture were analyzed and coded according the three basic criteria: (1) understanding of the physical contact being shown, (2) valueing of the physical contact, and (3) whether children had experienced the physical contact themselves. Results showed that at least two-thirds of the subjects described the physical contact in each picture. The children indicated, at most, only a 44.4 percent positive attitude toward the contact in any of the pictures. As a group, the subjects reacted most negatively to the hugging contact but, in actuality, most often experienced the hugging contact themselves. Observation data showed a strong correlation between the verbal statements and actual physical behavior of two of the five subjects. No firm conclusions can be drawn, but several trends are stated which suggest avenues for further research. An extensive bibliography on ethics, morals, and values is included. (SDH)

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Center for Young Children
Occasional Paper Number One

PRELIMINARY INVESTIGATION INTO MORAL BEHAVIOR WITH AN EMPHASIS UPON PERCEPTION OF PHYSICAL CONTACT BY FIVE YEAR OLDS

PS 007374

Center for Young Children
College of Education
University of Maryland
June 1972

PRELIMINARY INVESTIGATION INTO MORAL BEHAVIOR WITH AN EMPHASIS UPON PERCEPTION OF PHYSICAL CONTACT BY FIVE YEAR OLDS

Authors: Marilyn O. Childress, Robert Fessler, and Marian Greenblatt

This report is one of a series of occasional papers describing studies conducted in the Center for Young Children, a knowledge producing unit of the University of Maryland. The Center, which includes four classrooms, each with observation booths, is attempting to delineate new knowledge on process skills such as communicating, valuing, involvement, decision making, and knowing.

Characteristic of the studies conducted in the Center is the utilization of naturalistic research techniques. In other words, methodologies which describe what is happening in the classroom setting are frequently critical to gaining knowledge on the topic under investigation.

Another characteristic of the studies is that researchers are encouraged to build cumulative knowledge on a topic. Thus, for example, a number of studies have been conducted in the Center on such topics as decision making and communication--both verbal and nonverbal.

A third characteristic is that studies are cooperatively developed. A common mode of proceeding in knowledge production is to team an advanced graduate student with a professor. These persons work with groups of graduate students on the problem under investigation.

At the present time our society is beseiged by moral dilemmas. Common codes of values and ethics are being laid aside as new forms of ethical or moral behavior are explored. It is within this context that three graduate students in a basic curriculum course undertook to accomplish two purposes: (1) to cull out from the literature certain of the basic questions asked by those interested in moral or ethical behavior and theory; and (2) to look more closely at one value common to many societies--the value placed upon affectionate behavior. In this instance a group of five year olds were used as the subjects.

Credit goes to the students involved in the project. Robert Fessler assumed major responsibility for reviewing the literature and outlining basic moral questions. Marilyn Childress assumed responsibility for the chapter on the analysis of the data. Marian Greenblatt worked primarily on the implications and conclusions. These students have carried out a difficult task. It is the intent that their preliminary study will serve as prelude to other projects on similar themes.

Louise M. Berman, editor
Professor and Director
Center for Young Children

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CHAPTER ONE

THE STUDY OF MORAL BEHAVIOR AND VALUES

Introduction: The Larger Framework

Several researchers at the University of Maryland, aware of the obstacles to conducting research in the area of moral behavior and values, but also aware of the need and importance of such research, have engaged in this study with certain goals in mind.

The first, those concepts relevant to the study of moral behavior and values needed to be defined. Second, the various questions and issues that relate to moral behavior and values needed to be started and organized. Third, a search needed to be made for useful procedures in ascertaining the values young children hold.

Definitions

For the purposes of this study several working definitions were established.

Moral behavior is that behavior which is perceived to affect the well-being of oneself or of others. Thus, moral behavior consists of certain actions that people take. In contrast, a moral value or belief is an idea a person has about moral behavior. That is, a moral belief or value is any belief a person holds about what constitutes the well-being of oneself or of others. The term "morality" can be used to refer both to moral behavior and to moral values.

One aspect of moral values that is helpful to consider is the under-

lying assumptions that people make about what is right and wrong. That is, people hold certain basic or primary beliefs that affect, if not determine, all their other values. Often these basic beliefs have never been articulated. These assumptions, spoken or unspoken, when held by many people in a given group, are the basis for "commonality" in outlook and in life-style. These values can be used as criteria for determining who is "in" and who is "out" of any group.

The basic assumptions made by an individual may correspond to the norms of a group to which the individual perceives himself or herself as belonging. However, an assumption may be held by just one person; whereas norms are the moral values or standards of behavior of some group. Furthermore, the term "norm" carries the connotation that it can readily be determined and measured. "Assumption," on the other hand, suggests a moral value that is often taken for granted in such a way that it is not always easily discovered. In this paper either "moral values" or "moral beliefs" refer both to assumptions and to norms.

Four Ways to Hold Values

Persons vary in the degree to which they consider their values to be universal. Descriptions of some of the relationships that people may have to their values follows:

1. Some people may consider all their values to be universal truths in which all people are obliged to believe.
2. Some people may have two or more sets of values. What they consider to be appropriate and obligatory for themselves is different from what they consider to be appropriate and obligatory for others.

3. Some people may feel that there are some values that should be common to all people in order to insure the well-being of society. That which constitutes the well-being of society as opposed to the well-being of the individual is the ethical. These people also recognize that in addition to some values held in common, there are many other values which may differ from one individual to the next without diminishing the well-being of society.
4. Finally, some people may feel that all people have the right to develop their values as they see fit. They do not see their own set of values as being more universal than any other set. The example of the person does not matter.

The Different Aspects of Morality

Moral behavior and values can be studied from several different perspectives including psychological, philosophical, and pedagogical viewpoints. Too frequently studies in this field tend to be limited to only one of these three perspectives. What is sometimes needed is a broader view of moral behavior and values that considers various moral issues from all three aspects. In addition, there is at least one other dimension of moral behavior and values that should be considered; namely, the social and political implications of any given set of values. One important question from this perspective is, "What shall be done to implement a given set of values?"

Below are some questions to consider from each point of view.

1. The psychological aspects of moral behavior and values.

   a. What moral beliefs do people have?

   b. How do people act in situations that involve a moral decision?

   c. What chain of events leads to a particular moral behavior or value?

   d. To what extent are various kinds of moral behavior likely to occur together?

   e. To what extent are various kinds of values likely to be held by the same person?

   f. How are people's values related to their behavior?

2. The philosophical aspect of moral behavior and values.

   a. What beliefs should people have?

   b. What is the justification for holding one belief instead of another?

   c. How should people act?

   d. Why should people act one way instead of another?

3. The pedagogical aspect of moral behavior and values.

   a. What values should people be taught?

   b. What kinds of behavior should people be taught?

   c. To what extent <u>can</u> people be taught to act or to think in a certain way?

   d. To what extent should people be taught to act or to think in a certain way?

   e. Who should teach people to act or to think morally?

   f. How should people be taught moral behavior and values?

The amount of writing that has been done in any one of these three dimensions of moral behavior and values is considerable. A bibliography is included at the end of this paper. A good overview of the research relevant to the psychological perspective can be found in Derek Wright's

The Psychology of Moral Behavior.[1] Other important references that students of the psychological aspect might wish to consider include the work of Allport, Hartshorne and May, Kohlberg, and Piaget.

There are numerous entries whose primary focus is on the pedagogical dimension of moral behavior and values. Unfortunately the quality of the work that relates to the pedagogical aspect is rather inconsistent. Conceivably, this inconsistency is due to a failure on the part of some authors to familiarize themselves with the other dimensions of moral behavior and values. One useful book is Values and Teaching by Raths, et al.[2] Another worthwhile book is Introduction to Moral Education by Wilson, et al.[3] The first book is process-oriented and places greater stress than the second on the practical problems involved in teaching students how to develop their values.

Focus of This Study: Physical Contact as a Value

PS 007374

In this study an attempt was made to determine values of 18 young children by showing them pictures and asking pre-determined questions. The object was to assess the commonality or diversity of the children's assumptions with respect to physical contact as revealed by their responses.

Those readers who are interested in reviewing the literature that relates to the measurement of values can refer to the works of Pittel and

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[1] Derek Wright, The Psychology of Moral Behavior (Baltimore, Md.: Penguin Books, 1971).

[2] Louise E. Raths, et al., Values and Teaching (Columbus, Ohio: Charles E. Merrill Publishing Company, 1966).

[3] John Wilson, Introduction to Moral Education (Baltimore, Md.: Penguin Books, 1967.

Mendelsohn,[4] James Raths,[5] and Derek Wright.[6] Pittel and Mendelsohn give a comprehensive survey of what has been attempted in the area of measuring moral values. In addition, they describe what they consider to be some of the weaknesses of past research in this field. In their opinion these weaknesses include:

> (a) Questionable assumptions about the relationships of moral values and moral behavior; (b) a focus on moral abstractions rather than moral behavior in realistic contexts; (c) reliance on subjective and inferential scoring procedures which stress 'correct' moral values; and (d) inadequate standardization.[7]

In our study we have attempted to avoid or overcome those weaknesses described above.

The problem of directly describing or assessing values other people hold needs to be considered. People's behavior can be directly observed and recorded, but people's ideas such as an individual's moral values cannot be directly observed. What can be studied and recorded is the report people give us about moral values when they are questioned. From the report, which is a form of observable behavior, it is possible to infer what people's moral values may be. To be precise, however, it should be pointed out that it is behavior which is being studied and not values. The behavior is not moral behavior _per se_ but is a statement of preference from which

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[4]S.M. Pittel and G.A. Mendelsohn, "Measurement of Moral Values: A Review and Critique," Psychological Bulletin, 1966, 66:22-35.

[5]James Raths, "Values and Valuing," Educational Leadership, 21:543-546, May 1964.

[6]Derek Wright, Chapter 8 in The Psychology of Moral Behavior (Baltimore, Md.: Penguin Books, 1971).

[7]S.M. Pittel and G. A. Mendelsohn, op. cit., pp. 22-35.

moral values can be inferred. In other words, it is the behavior of people who are asked to state what values they hold that is studied. Projective techniques are based on the idea that it is not necessary or even desirable to ask people what values they hold. Rather, it is better to ask a person to react to something which is highly ambiuous and to use that response as a basis for inferring the values held by the person. But whether people are asked directly about their moral values or whether they are asked to react to something, it is their behavior which is being studied. And this observed behavior is used as the basis of any inferences regarding a person's values.

The focus on physical contact may seem a bit unusual for a study on moral values; however, physical contact plays an important role as an expression of people's relationships to others and as an expression of people's values. By means of physical contact (spanking), parents show their children that they have acted contrary to the parents' values. By means of physical contact (a hug), two people express their affection for each other. By means of physical contact (a strange adult caressing a child), a person can get himself ostracized from a community. Thus, the situations in which a person engages in physical contact reflect the values that person has. One of the few authors to recognize and to explain in some detail the significance of physical contact is Ashley Montagu. His book, Touching, The Human Significance of the Skin[8] is highly relevant to the present research study.

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[8] Ashley Montagu, Touching: The Human Significance of the Skin (New York: Columbia University Press, 1971).

A Look Ahead

The remainder of this study deals with physical contact as a value. The primary focus is upon the positive aspects of touch or physical contact. Chapter Two presents the procedures and Chapter Three the findings and discussion of them. Chapter Four then discusses conclusions and implications of the study.

CHAPTER TWO

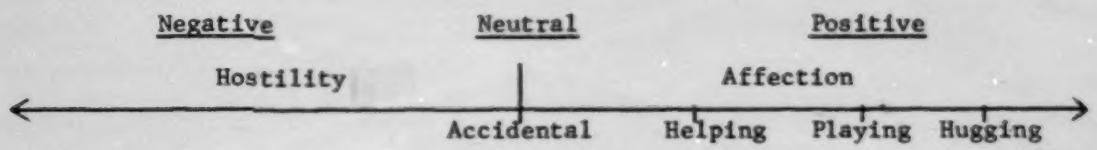
PROCEDURES IN THE STUDY ON PHYSICAL CONTACT

Definition of the Problem

This preliminary study was designed to examine physical contact within the broader scope of moral behavior. Physical contact between people causes many reactions and raises many questions. Why do people touch one another? What is the perceived motivation? How do people react? Why do they react the way they do?

The limitations of the study were two: only physical contact in five-year olds was examined. Second, focus was on physical contact which can be interpreted as affectionate behavior.

If physical contact were put on a continuum, various degrees of behavior can be identified. Behaviors range from negative or hostile behaviors to positive or affectionate behaviors.



The study involved two approaches: (1) asking children to react to pictures, and (2) observing children in the classroom. The study raised these broad questions:

1. How do children interpret affectionate forms of physical contact?
2. How can we observe and analyze physical contact by children?

Subjects

The subjects were selected from the Center for Young Children. Eighteen five-year olds were involved in this study. The five-year old group was used because the researchers thought they would be able to communicate with the children easily.

Procedures

Part I

To answer the first question of how children interpret affectionate forms of physical contact, the children were questioned about three key pictures. Picture A shows a girl helping a boy button his smock. Behind the children is an easel set up for painting outdoors. Picture B shows three boys playing outside. Two boys are supporting a third in the center. Picture C shows a mother hugging her daughter. The three pictures were selected because they show a range of behavior which might be interpreted as affectionate. These behaviors were indicated on the continuum above.

The children were asked questions in an attempt to elicit a reaction. The questions were developed so that responses might reveal the following: (1) do children understand the nature of affectionate physical contact? (2) do children value affectionate contact in a positive way? (3) have children experienced affectionate physical contact? The questions were:

1. What is going on in this picture?
2. Would you like to be in this picture? Why?
3. Has this ever happened to you? Tell me about it.

The answers were recorded for analysis.

Part II

The second phase of this project was developed by the researchers as an informal check on the first part of the study. Did the data gathered in Part I have any relationship to reality? Is there any relationship between what children say about affectionate forms of physical contact and their behavior as perceived by observers? Thus, an informal observation check was developed to find out how children actually interact, in contrast with their reactions to the set of pictures. Is there any correlation?

Five subjects were selected and each was observed for a series of three five-minute periods, a total of 15 minutes each. Each time the subject was in contact with another individual, child or adult, the researcher classified the contact in one of the following categories: affection, aggression, fear-motivated contact, attention getting contact, accidental contact, required contact, or other contact.

Definitions of Categories

It is understood that all of the following categories imply a value judgment by the researcher. These categories need to be sharpened and tested against data to see if they are valid. These are the definitions used for the purposes of this study:

Affection: Any contact which appears to be motivated by positive feeling toward another person. It includes the following types of contact: hugging, helping, holding hands, telling secrets, intentional contact while playing with another person.

Aggression: Any contact which appears to be motivated by negative feelings or appears to be a deliberate hostile act. The following are examples of aggressive behavior: hitting, pushing, kicking.

Attention getting contact: Any contact which appears to be motivated by getting the attention of someone else. It includes tapping another person on the hand, shoulder, etc.

Fear-motivated contact: Any contact that is motivated by fear of something or someone other than the person with whom one is in contact. This includes: embracing, grasping, when an object of fear is present.

Required contact: Contact required by rules or by an authority figure. It would include the following: contact during games which require contact, or holding hands when a teacher requests that students hold hands.

Accidental contact: Contact that appears to be unintentional. It includes the following: brushing past a person, touching a person, touching a person when engaged in an activity in which people are close to each other but are not required to touch one another.

Other contact: Any contact which cannot be included in the previous categories.

In most forms of physical contact one person is the initiator and one the object of the contact. For the purposes of this study to determine who initiated the contact, the passive person is considered the responder and the active person the initiator of the contact. There is difficulty with this definition when, for example, two people accidentally back into one another, or two people decide to embrace or shake hands. The initiator is unclear. Perhaps a third category is needed--both initiated contact. It might be necessary to include other verbal or nonverbal clues to determine who is really the initiator and the responder.

The observation form used (see Chart 1 below) had columns which provided space to indicate contact with whom, the situation, the location

of the contact on the body, as well as the researcher's interpretation of the motivation for the contact, with some form of justification required. These motivations were categorized on the spot by the observer and the completed forms were tallied and analyzed as a group.

Chart 1

Form for Observation of Physical Contact

SUBJECT: _____ DATE: _____ TIME: _____

CONTACT WITH (Sex, Peer/ Adult)	SITUATION	TYPE OF CONTACT Description	INTERPRETATION (Agressive Attention Getting Fear Required Contact Accidental Other Why?

CHAPTER THREE

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

The project data are considered in two parts: the data collected from the child's oral responses to the three pictures of physical contact with respect to affection and the data collected from observations of physical contact of several selected children.

Part I: Content Analysis of Picture Data

Coding of Picture Data

The research questions provided the basis for establishing two approaches for coding the picture response data: a simple two-part category set and a more complex set of categories. It first appeared that the picture response data could be categorized in a fairly clear-cut manner. On the basis of the children's statements, we coded responses to three questions:

"Do children understand the nature of affectionate physical contact?"

"Do children value affectionate contact?"

"Have children experienced affectionate contact?"

We coded responses to the first and third questions as either "yes" or "no"; responses to the second question are coded as either "positive" or "negative." These codings are recorded in Table I. Each child's number is placed in a vertical column while space for coding his responses to each of the three pictures is provided horizontally. This organization

TABLE I

RESPONSES TO BROAD QUESTIONS RELATIVE
TO PICTURES DEPICTING AFFECTION

Child	Picture A (Helping)				Picture B (Playing)				Picture C (Hugging)			
	Understanding Scene	Contact	Valuing	Experiencing	Understanding Scene	Contact	Valuing	Experiencing	Understanding Scene	Contact	Valuing	Experiencing
1	Yes	No	Neg.	No	Yes	No	Neg.	No	Yes	Yes	Neg.	Yes
2	Yes	Yes	Pos.	No	Yes	No	Neg.	No	No	No	Pos.	Yes
3	Yes	Yes	Neg.	No	Yes	Yes	Neg.	No	Yes	Yes	Neg.	No
4	Yes	Yes	Neg.	No	No	No	Neg.	No	Yes	Yes	Neg.	Yes
5	No	No	Neg.	No	No	No	Pos.	Yes	Yes	Yes	Neg.	Yes
6	Yes	Yes	Neg.	Yes	Yes	Yes	Pos.	Yes	No	No	Neg.	No
7	Yes	Yes	Pos.	Yes	Yes	Yes	Neg.	No	Yes	Yes	Neg.	No
8	Yes	Yes	Neg.	No	Yes	Yes	Neg.	No	Yes	Yes	Neg.	Yes
9	Yes	Yes	Pos.	No	Yes	Yes	Pos.	No	N.A.*	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.
10	Yes	Yes	Neg.	Yes	Yes	Yes	Neg.	Yes	Yes	Yes	Neg.	Yes
11	Yes	No	Pos.	No	Yes	Yes	Neg.	No	Yes	No	Pos.	No
12	Yes	Yes	Neg.	No	Yes	Yes	Pos.	No	Yes	No	Pos.	Yes

*N.A. = No Answer

Table I, continued

Child	Picture A (Helping)				Picture B (Playing)				Picture C (Hugging)			
	Understanding Scene Contact		Valuing	Experiencing	Understanding Scene Contact		Valuing	Experiencing	Understanding Scene Contact		Valuing	Experiencing
13	No	No	Pos.	No	Yes	Yes	Pos.	No	Yes	Yes	Neg.	No
14	Yes	Yes	Pos.	No	Yes	Yes	Pos.	Yes	Yes	Yes	Pos.	Yes
15	Yes	Yes	Neg.	No	Yes	No	Neg.	No	Yes	No	Neg.	No
16	Yes	Yes	Neg.	No	Yes	Yes	Pos.	Yes	Yes	Yes	Neg.	Yes
17	Yes	Yes	Neg.	No	Yes	No	Pos.	No	Yes	Yes	Neg.	Yes
18	Yes	No	Neg.	No	Yes	Yes	Neg.	No	Yes	Yes	Neg.	No
TOTALS:												
Yes	16	13	-	3	16	11	-	4	15	12	-	10
No	2	5	-	15	2	7	-	14	2	5	-	7
Pos.	-	-	6	-	-	-	8	-	-	-	4	-
Neg.	-	-	12	-	-	-	10	-	-	-	13	-
N.A.	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	1	1	1

facilitates both a vertical analysis of the total group response to each individual picture and a horizontal reading of the child's response to all three pictures.

This method of coding provided an adequate preliminary organization of data: It indicated, however, the need for further clarification in the coding process. The two-part coding system did not enable the coder to specify the nature of the child's value reactions to the picture. For example, some children expressed a positive desire to be in the picture for reasons other than a favorable attitude toward the contact (i.e. to painting or playing). Similarly, some children indicated having experienced what was happening in the picture, but were referring to action other than the contact (i.e. painting rather than helping).

A second set of categories, based upon guidelines for establishing categories suggested by Claire Sellitz in Research Methods in Social Relations,[1] eliminated these problems by providing a more meaningful coding method. The categories for coding the child's understanding, valuing, and experiencing responses were expanded to three, five, and seven, respectively. (See Final Category System, page 23). For example, to the question, "Would you like to be in this picture?" the child may have responded, "Yes, because I like to paint." Instead of recording the child's value response as either "positive" or "negative," this response is coded as "favorable attitude toward the scene without reference to contact" since the child responded positively

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[1] Claire Sellitz, et. al., Research Methods in Social Relations, revised in one volume (New York: Henry Holt and Company, Inc., 1959), pp. 391-408.

to the scene without mention of the physical contact in the picture.

The three graduate students collaborated on coding the picture response data to assure uniformity in the use of the coding system. The code number of each response appears in Table II. The failure of the coders to reach a consensus on the coding of several responses resulted in the clarification of wording in one category. The code, "Did not know what was happening" was changed to "Did not describe what was happening." This clarification was necessary since several of the children when asked what was happening in a picture at first did not verbally describe either the contact or the scene. This left the questioners to conclude that the child was not aware of what was happening in the picture. After subsequent questioning, however, several children responded positively or negatively to the contact in the picture and in so doing verbally discussed the contact in the picture. In other cases, the child who had not initially described the contact or the scene, later described a similar situation in which he had participated. The graduate students concluded that the child understood the action in the picture if he either described it verbally at some time during the questioning or compared the contact in the picture to a similar situation.

TABLE II

ANALYSIS OF RESPONSES BASED UPON REVISED CATEGORY SYSTEM TO QUESTIONS RELATIVE TO PICTURES DEPICTING AFFECTION*

Name	Sex	Picture A (Helping)			Picture B (Playing)			Picture C (Hugging)		
		Understand	Value	Experience	Understand	Value	Experience	Understand	Value	Experience
1	F	2	5	4	2	5	4	1	4	1
2	F	1	2	3	2	5	4	1	4	1
3	F	1	5	3	1	5	3	1	5	3
4	F	1	5	3	3	5	5	1	4	2
5	M	3	5	5	2	1	4	1	4	2
6	M	1	4	2	1	2	1	3	5	5
7	M	1	1	5	1	4	3	1	4	3
8	F	1	5	3	1	2	3	1	4	2
9	F	1	2	3	1	2	3	3	6	6
10	M	1	4	2	1	4	2	1	4	2
11	F	2	1	4	1	5	3	1	2	3
12	F	1	4	3	1	2	3	1	2	1
13	M	3	1	4	1	2	3	1	4	3
14	F	1	2	5	1	2	1	1	2	1
15	F	1	4	5	2	5	4	2	5	4
16	M	1	5	3	1	2	1	1	4	2
17	F	1	6	5	2	3	4	1	6	7
18	M	2	1	4	1	5	3	1	5	3

*For coding system, see page 23.

FINAL CATEGORY SYSTEM:

FOR PICTURE DATA ANALYSIS

Understanding Physical Contact: These answers imply the child's understanding of physical contact. Question: What is going on in this picture? Reply: The Mother is hugging her daughter.

1. Say contact.
2. Did not describe contact in the picture
3. Did not describe what was happening in the picture.

Valuing Physical Contact: These answers imply the child's value of physical contact. Question: Would you like to be in this picture? Reply: Yes, I like to hug my Mommy.

1. Favorable attitude toward the scene without reference of contact.
2. Favorable attitude toward contact.
3. Neutral attitude toward contact or did not know.
4. Unfavorable attitude imputed to contact.
5. Unfavorable attitude imputed to the scene without mention of contact.
6. No answer.

Experiencing Physical Contact: These answers imply the child's experiences of physical contact. Question: Has this ever happened to you? Reply: Yes, when I come home from school.

1. Child perceived contact, has experienced contact and liked it.
2. Child perceived contact, has experienced contact and did not like it.
3. Child perceived contact and has not experienced contact.
4. Child does not see contact.
5. Unclear whether or not subject was referring to contact.
6. Did not know or no response.
7. Child perceived contact, has experienced contact but did not express a positive or negative reaction.

In the process of coding responses, it also became apparent that the categorization of each child's response to experiencing depended upon both evidence of the child's understanding and his reaction toward the contact in the picture. For example, if the child responded, "Yes, I've done it a couple of times," the coder had to refer back to the understanding and the valuing responses to ascertain whether the child understood the contact and how he reacted to it. If the answer to both was positive, the coder could indicate that the child had "perceived the contact, had experienced it and liked it." In several cases, the child's response did not clearly indicate whether he was referring to the contact when he said he had experienced what was happening in the picture. For this reason, another category was added for this response: "Unclear whether or not the subject was referring to the contact."

A problem in coding the picture response data resulted from an inadequacy in the data gained from the questions on experiencing. Each child was asked the question, "Did you like it or not?" The examiners failed to ask this question consistently in following up the child's first response. Thus, if the child responded "Maybe" to the question, "Would you like to be in this picture?" and then indicated that he had experienced the contact, it was impossible to know whether the child reacted positively or negatively to the experience. This problem could have been avoided had the additional question been asked to every child.

A Comparative Analysis of Picture Data /See Table III/

Understanding: At least two-thirds of the children described the physical contact in each of the three pictures. The contact in the hug scene, Picture C, was understood by the greatest number of children (77.8 percent). Children indicated the least understanding of the contact

in the playing scene , Picture B (66.7 percent).

Valuing: Children indicated most positive reactions to the pictures of boys playing, Picture B, and children helping, Picture A. Overall, however, the children never indicated higher than a 44.4 percent positive attitude toward any of the pictures. Eight of the children (44.8 percent) indicated a desire to be in the playing scene, Picture B; seven children (38.9 percent) indicated a desire to be in the helping scene, Picture A. Seven children reacted positively to the contact of playing, while an equal percentage (16.6 percent) expressed a positive attitude toward the contact in both the hugging, Picture C, and helping picture , Picture A. The wide variance in percentages of positive attitude toward the helping scene (38.9 percent) and the percentage of positive attitude toward the specific contact involved in helping (16.6 percent) indicated that 22.2 percent reacted favorably toward the painting rather than to the specific contact in the picture.

Children reacted most negatively toward the hug scene, Picture C; twelve children (66.7 percent) expressed a desire not to be in the picture. Eight of these children (44.4 percent) responded negatively toward the hug contact. For example, one child responded: "I don't like people to kiss me. It's mush." On the other hand, only two children (11.1 percent) indicated an unfavorable response to the specific contact in the playing scene, Picture B. Both of these children, however, interpreted the three boys playing as two boys carrying a third injured boy.

Experiencing: Children most often expressed having experienced the contact of the hug, Picture C. Nine or half of the group studied, indicated having had such an experience. Several of these children, however, expressed having had such affectionate physical contact only on specific occasions

TABLE III

COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF DATA FOR THREE PICTURES

Categories	Picture A (Helping)						Picture B (Playing)						Picture C (Hugging)					
	Understand		Value		Experience		Understand		Value		Experience		Understand		Value		Experience	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
1	13	72.2	4	22.2	0	0	12	66.7	1	5.5	3	16.6	14	77.8	1	5.5	3	16.6
2	3	16.6	3	16.6	2	11.1	5	27.7	7	38.9	1	5.5	1	5.5	3	16.6	5	27.7
3	1	11.1	1	5.5	7	38.9	1	5.5	1	5.5	8	44.4	3	16.6	2	11.1	5	27.7
4			4	22.2	4	22.2			2	11.1	5	27.7			8	44.4	1	5.5
5			6	33.3	5	27.7			7	38.9	1	5.5			4	22.2	2	11.1
6					0	0.0					0	0.0					1	5.5
7					0	0.0					0	0.0					1	5.5

Total Students, 18

See Final Category System, p. 27, for explanation of category numbers. The reader should note that for Tables III, IV, and V, the data are reported in such a way that the reader needs to find the sub-category appropriate to each of the major categories of Understand, Value, and Experience. For example, in reading the data under Picture A (Helping), as one reads the vertical columns marked "Understand," the reader needs to look at the categories under "Understand" on page 27. Category 1, then, for "Understand" would be "Say contact." As one moves to the vertical column "Experience," category 1 would be "Child perceived contact, has experienced contact and liked it."

FINAL CATEGORY SYSTEM:

FOR PICTURE DATA ANALYSIS

Understanding Physical Contact:

1. Say contact.
2. Did not describe contact in the picture.
3. Did not describe what was happening in the picture.

Valuing Physical Contact:

1. Favorable attitude toward the scene without reference of contact.
2. Favorable attitude toward contact.
3. Neutral attitude toward contact or did not know.
4. Unfavorable attitude imputed to contact.
5. Unfavorable attitude imputed to the scene without mention of contact.
6. No answer.

Experiencing Physical Contact:

1. Child perceived contact, has experienced contact and liked it.
2. Child perceived contact, has experienced contact and did not like it.
3. Child perceived contact and has not experienced contact.
4. Child does not see contact.
5. Unclear whether or not subject was referring to contact.
6. Did not know or no response.
7. Child perceived contact, has experienced contact but did not express a positive or negative reaction.

(i.e. when their mother left for a trip or when the child hurt his ankle in the car door).

Only two children (11. 1 percent) indicated having experienced the contact of helping, Picture A, while four children (22.1 percent) expressed experiencing the contact of playing, Picture B. Children most often perceived the contact of the playing picture,yet without mentioning having experienced such playing contact. Eight children (44.4 percent) perceived this contact, yet indicated having no such similar experience.

Picture Data Analysis: Comparison by Sex

Of the eighteen students involved in this study, there were seven males and eleven females. Picture data responses were tabulated according to sex (Tables IV and V). These response differences were tabulated according to understanding, valuing, and experiencing physical contact with respect to affection.

Understanding: There was a difference in the understanding of physical contact between males and females in two of the three pictures. A higher percentage of females (81.8 percent) than males (57.1 percent) described the contact in the helping scene, Picture A; whereas, a higher percentage of males (85.7 percent) than females (56.4 percent) understood the contact of the boys playing, Picture B. An explanation for the higher male recognition of playing contact may be attributed to the presence of males playing in the picture.

Valuing: There are several noticeable differences between males and females in the valuing of affectionate physical contact. The males indicated no positive attitude toward either the hugging scene, Picture C, or the hugging contact. On the other hand, five girls (45.5 percent) expressed a favorable attitude toward the scene. Five of the seven boys

TABLE IV

COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF DATA BY SEX: FEMALES*

Categories	Picture A (Helping)						Picture B (Playing)						Picture C (Hugging)					
	Understand		Value		Experience		Understand		Value		Experience		Understand		Value		Experience	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
1	9	81.8	1	9.1	0	0.0	6	54.5	0	0.0	1	9.1	8	72.7	1	9.1	3	27.3
2	2	18.2	3	27.3	0	0.0	4	36.4	4	36.4	0	0.0	1	9.1	3	27.3	2	18.2
3	0		0	0.0	6	54.5	1	9.1	1	9.1	5	45.5	2	18.2	0	0.0	2	18.2
4			2	18.2	2	18.2			0	0.0	4	36.4			3	27.3	1	9.1
5			4	36.4	3	27.3			6	54.5	1	9.1			2	18.2	1	9.1
6			1	9.1	0	0.0			0	0.0	0	0.0			2	18.2	1	9.1
7					0	0.0			0	0.0	0	0.0			0	0.0	1	9.1

Total of 11 Females

*See Final Category System, p.27 for explanation of category numbers. For help in interpreting data, see the bottom of Table III, p. 26.

TABLE V

COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF DATA BY SEX: MALES*

Categories	Picture A (Helping)						Picture B (Playing)						Picture C (Hugging)					
	Understand		Value		Experience		Understand		Value		Experience		Understand		Value		Experience	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
1	4	57.1	3	42.9	0	0.0	6	85.7	1	14.3	2	28.6	6	85.7	0	0.0	0	0.0
2	2	14.3	0	0.0	2	28.6	1	14.3	3	42.9	1	14.3	0	0.0	0	0.0	3	42.9
3	1	28.6	0	0.0	1	14.3	0	0.0	0	0.0	3	42.9	1	14.3	0	0.0	3	42.9
4			2	28.6	2	28.6			2	28.6	1	14.3			5	71.4	0	0.0
5			2	28.6	2	28.6			1	14.3	0	0.0			2	28.6	1	14.3
6									0	0.0	0	0.0			0	0.0	0	0.0
7									0	0.0	0	0.0			0	0.0	0	0.0

Total of 7 males

*See Final Category System, p. 27 for explanation of category numbers. For help in interpreting data, see the bottom of Table III, page 26.

(71.4 percent) specifically expressed a negative attitude toward the contact of the hug. Only three of the girls (27.3 percent) indicated a negative attitude toward the specific hug contact.

Both males and females indicated the highest positive reactions toward the contact in the playing scene, Picture B; three boys (42.9 percent) and four girls (36.4 percent) indicated a desire to be in the picture. Several girls reacted negatively to the contact because of the presence of males and often retracted their negative attitude when the questioners suggested that girls be substituted for the boys playing.

Experiencing: There is some variation in the percentage of expressed experiences between males and females. None of the girls indicated having experienced helping contact, while this was also the contact experienced least by the males (28.6 percent). A higher percentage of males indicated having experienced the playing contact, Picture B (42.9 percent) than females (9.1 percent). Again, this may have been the result of males present in the pictures. Males and females indicated the closest correlations of expressed experiences of the hug contact, Picture C: three boys (42.9 percent) and six girls (45.5 percent) expressed having had such contact.

Part II: Content Analysis: Direct Observations of Physical Contact

This part of the study of physical contact was of a more informal nature; it was limited by the number of subjects observed and the length of the observation periods. It was conducted in an effort to ascertain the relationship between a child's verbal statements about affectionate physical contact and his actual physical contact in the classroom. Examiners observed physical contact of five children during three, five-minute periods.

Coders tallied each incident of physical contact according to the nature of the contact as defined in the six categories (affection, aggression, accidental, attention-getting, fear, and other) as defined at the end of Chapter Two. Observers tallied in parentheses those incidents of physical contact initiated by other than the child in the study. Tallies from each of the sessions were combined in a final total (Table VI).

Of the five subjects in general, physical contact most often initiated and received was accidental in nature. Since this study was concerned, however, with affectionate physical contact among children, observers particularly noted differences in this type of contact. The data revealed a strong correlation between verbal expression toward physical contact and non-verbal contact in two of the five subjects. One child (Child 3) indicated a consistent understanding of the contact in each of the scenes, yet imputed an unfavorable attitude toward the specific contact involved in each scene. During the direct observation periods, he initiated no affectionate physical contact, while he was the recipient of two such incidences. The only incident of physical contact in which he was directly involved was accidental in nature.

In contrast, another child (Child 2) consistently indicated an understanding and a favorable attitude toward the contact in each picture. During the five-minute observations, she initiated the greatest number of incidents of affectionate contact (three incidences) of the five children studied.

TABLE VI

DIRECT OBSERVATIONS OF PHYSICAL CONTACT

Child	Obser. No.	Categories						
		Affection	Aggression	Fear	Attention	Accidental	Other	Total
1	1		1			(1)		
	2	1 (1)			1	2		
	3	(1,1,1)	(1,1,1)			(1)		
Totals of	3	1 (4)	1 (3)		1	2 (2)		5 (9)
2	1	2						2
	2	1	(1)			1		2 (1)
	3	(1)						(1)
Totals of	3	3 (1)	(1)			1		4 (2)
3	1	(1,1)				1		1 (2)
	2					1 (2)		1 (2)
	3					(1)		(1)
Totals of	3	(2)				2 (3)		2 (5)
4	1	1 (1)				1 (1)		2 (2)
	2					5		5
	3		2			3 (1)		5 (1)
Totals of	3	1 (1)	2			9 (2)		12 (8)
5	1				2			
	2	1						
	3		(1)					
Totals of	3	1	(1)		2	4 (1)		7 (2)

Numbers in parentheses ( ) represent the numbers of times the child was the recipient of physical contact.
Numbers without parentheses represent times when the child initiated the physical contact.

CHAPTER FOUR

CONCLUSIONS AND IMPLICATIONS

Trends - Part I

At this point it is wise to review the three basic questions of the study. On the basis of their statements:

1. Do children understand the nature of affectionate physical contact?
2. Do children value affectionate contact?
3. Have children experienced affectionate physical contact?

Due to the limited nature of this project, it is impossible to draw any firm conclusions. However, the study does indicate interesting trends which should be pursued in future research.

The study indicates that by age five, children generally state an understanding of the nature of affectionate forms of physical contact as we have defined it above.

No commonality of values regarding affectionate contact seemed to be evident, although there was a trend to show a negative reaction to the more intense affectionate contact. This reaction was particularly true with the boys. The motivations of the five-year old is questioned. Are his verbalized reactions his true feelings? Is he expressing what he thinks he should say?

The boys responded positively to pictures showing affectionate play with peers and negatively to the more obvious forms of affection. Has society by age five imposed the behavior pattern on girls to show affection,

such as helping and loving, and the reverse behavior on boys, to show reserve?

Helping is a behavior which is usually stressed and required by parents and teachers. It is significant that so few children recognized the helping behavior in the picture and further claimed not to have experienced it. Often the children discussed other things in the picture, such as painting outside, rather than the action dimension of the girl helping the boy. Does this imply that the lessons of helping were not well taught or that the children reacted negatively to the teaching of imposed values? Do children reject these values as unimportant to their own well being?

The examples given by the children for their experiences with the most obvious form of affection, the hug, were often of an extreme type rather than routine. These did not fit into any category system.

"I want to be a baby."

"After my foot was caught in the car door."

"After a trip to _____"

"I run away when they try to kiss me."

"I don't like it. It's mush."

These reactions raised some questions:

Do parents stop hugging their children after a certain age?

Do children no longer need affectionate contact, except under extreme situations?

Who initiates the affectionate contact?

To what extent is this unique to our culture?

Trends - Part II

The second part of the study was an informal gathering of data. The researchers felt it was necessary to obtain information from another perspective as a simple check on the primary portion of the study. It is assumed in the analysis of Part I that when a subject stated a favorable or unfavorable reaction to the picture, he expressed how he valued physical contact. Do children, or people in general, act the way they think they should? Thus an informal observation check (Part II) was developed to find out. With this in mind, it is noted that the physical contact was categorized exclusively from the point of view of the observer. This approach is limited because the researcher is not very familiar with the subject or the setting. However, there are implications for future work. The correlation of the two subjects' behavior with their stated beliefs was strong. This suggests using more subjects and more observations to see if there is any validity to this approach.

The researchers found it difficult to deal with stated motivation except on a superficial level. The definitions indicate this. There is a need to tighten the definitions. This analysis is descriptive. The next step would be to utilize other procedures to ascertain deeper psychological motivations. For example, the category "attention getting" was limited to a simple tap. But does a child seek attention for affection? Can agressive behavior also be seeking affection or attention? Further research might try to deal with deeper emotions. To determine any commonalities necessitates differentiating what is perceived to be correct behavior and what is the child's behavior.

Implications for Future Research

There are many questions regarding the notions children have about their own well being. The following are some thoughts and suggested avenues for future research.

To what degree do the trends described reflect the beginning independence of five-year olds? Are they expressing what they really feel or are they parroting what is expected of them by parents and peers? At what age can we say children are completely candid and willing to express their own feelings? It is worth conducting similar studies with three and four-year olds, as well as six and seven-year olds?

Would the results be different if a familiar person, such as the teacher interviewed these children, instead of strangers?

If a child does not perceive physical contact, or does not recall experiencing it, does this indicate that such contact is not important to him or that he is truly unfamiliar with it?

There is a problem in working with the picture technique. Children do not necessarily generalize. If they observed the girl helping the boy button his smock, they tried to recall a specific time they did just that rather than generalize the example to helping another individual. Future studies might work on one aspect of the affection continuum, for example helping, in various situations to see if children understand and value this particular concept. This can be correlated with direct observation of the subject.

Nonverbal behavior during the interview often could be used to help interpret reactions to physical contact. For example, the children made fists, spit, sucked a thumb, put fingers in mouth, or acted silly in describing the pictures. It would be useful to consult a child psychologist

since the observations and verbal reactions deal with motivations for physical contact.

If a larger sample is used, comparisons can be made by race or culture groups. Before any common values can be determined, certainly a broader spectrum must be included for valid conclusions. Do all children hold the same values and think the same things are necessary for their own well being?

If the picture approach is to be continued, it would be wise to select other pictures to vary the sex roles. For example, it would be interesting to study affectionate contact as related to different relationships: father and son, girls at play, boys and girls at play.

Affection by the child toward a variety of ages can be studied, such as parent, grandparent, sibling, friend, and baby. At what age do society's mores and taboos reflect themselves in children? Although the affection studied was only child-centered, it would be interesting to study reactions to affectionate behavior as observed by the child. For example, when parents or grandparents show affection toward each other, how does a child react?

Affection toward objects can be explored, such as a toy or pet. If we consider these objects as extensions of the child, it would be interesting to see how a child cares for things other than people. Fantasies are an important part of childhood. Children often express their true feelings toward an object or toy rather than the person involved. If this is so, this approach might be more revealing of their inner feelings and the values they hold dear.

What assumptions are made about behavior and physical contact in a classroom scene, which after all was the "natural setting" of the study?

Perhaps a check of this behavior in another environment would be worth pursuing.

This study was limited to physical contact of an affectionate quality. Parallel studies can be pursued dealing with the full range of hostile or aggressive behavior, and fear-related behavior.

Other Approaches

Researchers should not be limited to the picture approach. Other ways of having children express their feelings about physical contact should be tried. For example:

1. Have children draw themselves with another member of their family or a friend at play. See if they draw the figures in close contact. Let them discuss their drawing and determine whether they like to hold hands, for example, and whether they have ever done it.

2. Let children react to a story or puppet show involving physical contact. Do they like it? Have they ever seen that happen before? Have they ever done that before?

3. Set up a situation which will force children to react to physical contact. Let them discuss it afterwards.

4. Interview parents to discover if the child's perception of affectionate experiences are valid.

5. Have children act out common situations: leaving for school, going to sleep, playing with parents. See whether affection or physical contact is dramatized.

6. Act out the above with parent and child.

Conclusion

All of the above are a variety of approaches to study how children value physical contact. So much more work must be done in this area before it can possibly be concluded if people share common values.

Values and ethical behavior are taught in the public schools either consciously or unconsciously by teachers who, by example or design, are influencing the captive audience of children. It is vital that we rethink the function of the schools in this area. Are there any common values which we share? Do we want to teach for a commonality of values or do we want to emphasize diversity? It there some other approach, such as teaching the process of valuing? In spite of the complexity of this issue, we should not put values teaching on the back burner. As a preliminary investigation, it is hoped that this study has helped in the broader endeavor of studying what is meant by moral or ethical behavior. It is in the direction of that larger picture that research must direct itself.

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